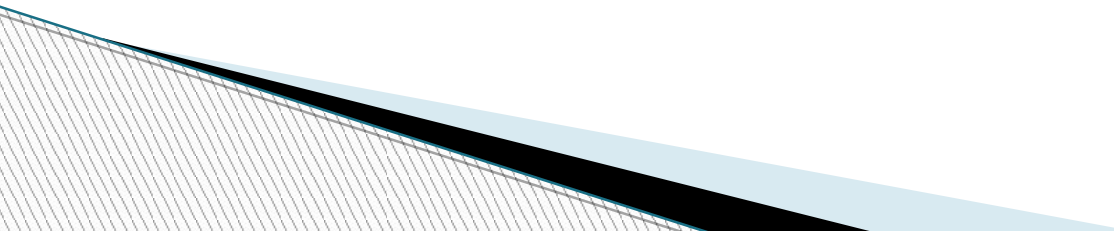
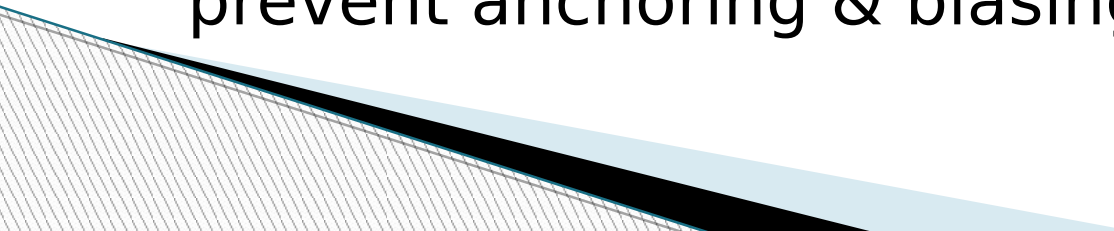


# **Six Steps to Critical Thinking & Multiple Hypothesis**

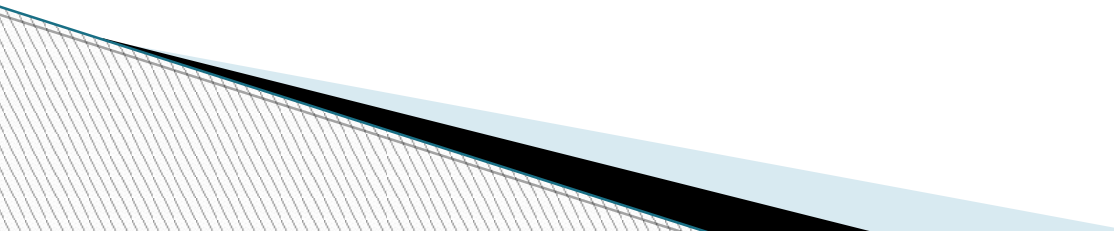
# Core Competencies

- ▶ **Ability to carefully analyze information to determine its validity as evidence**
  - ▶ **Consider alternative explanations and seek additional information when necessary**
- 

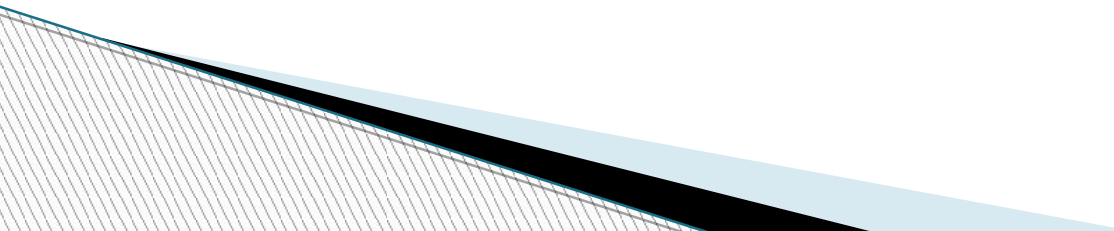
# What is Critical Thinking?

- ▶ Information is carefully analyzed to determine its adequacy, accuracy, reliability, and potential interpretations
  - ▶ Workers are willing to ask and answer hard questions regarding evidentiary claims and the logic of arguments
  - ▶ Critical thinking involves the ability to make critical distinctions and consider alternative explanations
  - ▶ Willingness to develop & test hypotheses to prevent anchoring & biasing
- 

# **From ANCRA to Procedure A Quick Review**

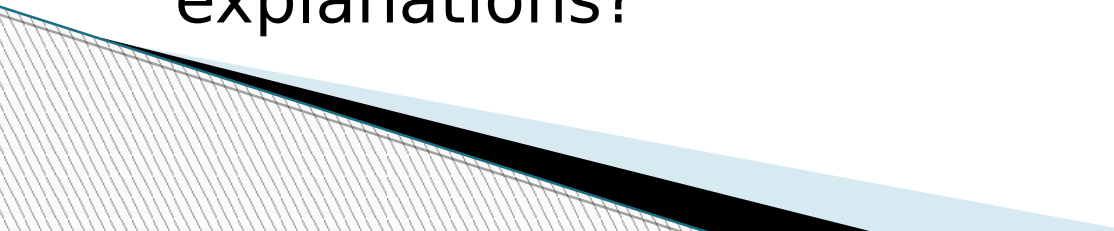
- ▶ What are the three criteria that must be present in order for a report of abuse and/or neglect to be generated by the hotline?
  - ▶ What is the purpose of Procedure 300?
  - ▶ What's the core function of the CPSW?
- 

# From Procedures 300

- ▶ When assessing evidence & direct observation in order to determine a final finding, the Child Protection Specialist should apply the following 6 critical thinking steps:
- 

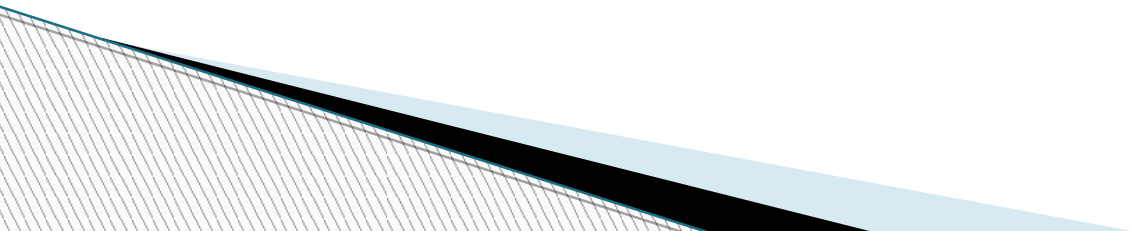
# **From Procedures 300**

## **6 Critical Thinking Steps**

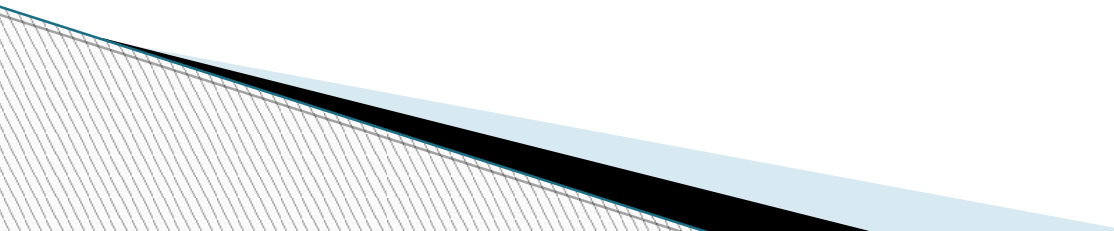
- ▶ What information is available?
  - ▶ What am I being asked to believe or accept?
  - ▶ What evidence is available to support the assertion...is it reliable and valid?
  - ▶ Are there alternative ways of interpreting the information?
  - ▶ What additional information would help to evaluate the alternatives?
  - ▶ What conclusions are most reasonable based on the information and the number of alternative explanations?
- 

# The Value in Self-Reflection

- ▶ We are highly susceptible to error; it is extremely important to accept uncertainty in this work
- ▶ We must adopt a willingness to listen to and engage perspectives and opinions different than our own



# A Critical Thinking Approach

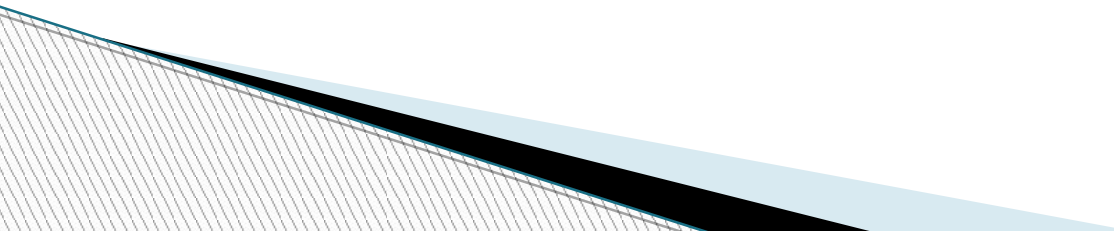
- ▶ The capacity to withhold judgment until all the evidence is reviewed
  - ▶ Respect for rational argument; respond to *arguments*, not *persons*
  - ▶ Willingness to admit error and change one's mind in response to new information
  - ▶ Persistent and determined search for knowledge
- 



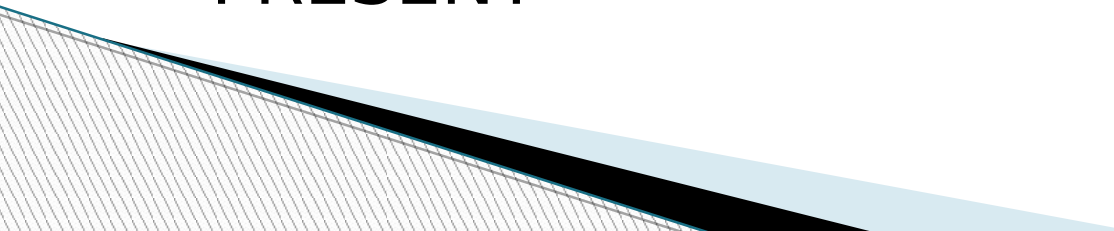
# Functions of Critical Thinking

- ▶ To find the most plausible interpretation of evidence regarding past events, that is “what actually happened??” or conditions, i.e. “what is actually the case?”

# **Functions of Critical Thinking**

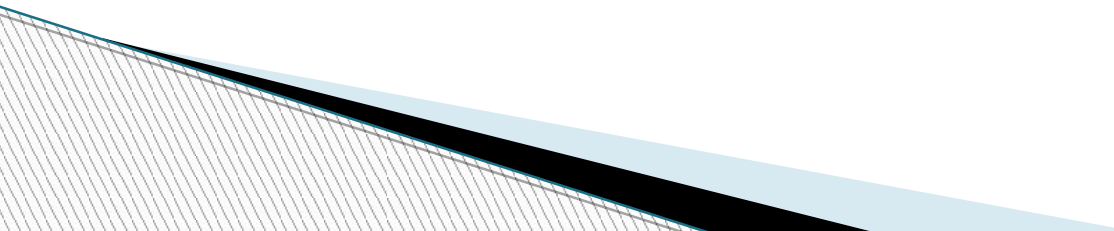
- ▶ **To arrive at the best strategies and plans for achieving desired goals**
  - ▶ **To learn the right lessons from past experiences**
  - ▶ **To make tough decisions in a thoughtful and rational way**
  - ▶ **“We must shift from being believers to being questioners” (Eileen Gambrill)**
- 

# The Rule of Optimism

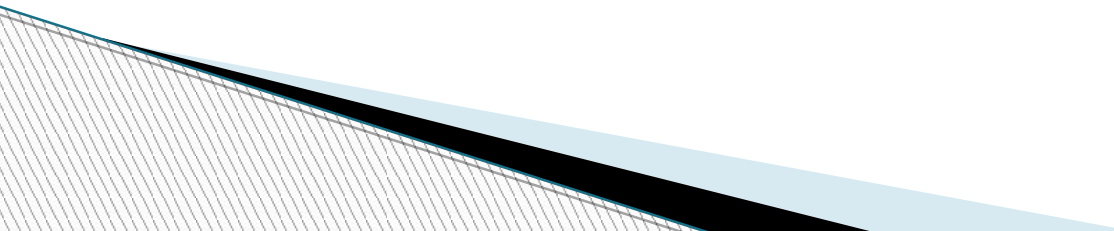
- ▶ THE TENDENCY TO OVERLOOK BEHAVIORS THAT HARM OTHERS
  - THE LEAST DISCREDITING INTERPRETATIONS OF OBSERVED CONDUCT WILL BE USED
  - ▶ MISINTERPRETATION OF SIGNS THAT ARE PRESENT AND THOSE THAT ARE NOT PRESENT
- 

# Challenges to Critical Thinking

## The Rule of Optimism

- ▶ The parents/caretakers are cooperative
  - ▶ The house looks good enough, or at least okay...
  - ▶ The children don't seem afraid, timid, etc.
  - ▶ The explanation seems somewhat plausible...so.....
- 

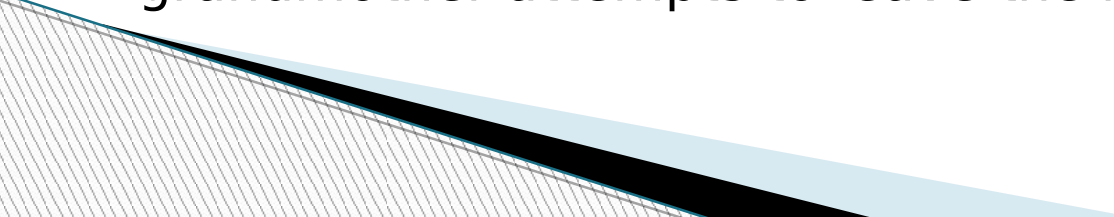
# Challenges to Critical Thinking

- ▶ ***Anchoring:*** forming first impressions
  - ▶ Accepting evidence that reinforces our first impression
  - ▶ Rejecting evidence that contradicts our first impressions
  - ▶ Giving weight to our feelings rather than the facts
- 

# Example

Maternal grandmother brings her 4 month old granddaughter into the ER. The child presents with several dime size bruises to her upper arms and a 2 inch linear bruise on the left cheek of her buttocks. The grandmother reports suspecting the mother boyfriend of causing the injuries and that she plans to seek custody of the child stating, "I have her most of the time anyhow." She reports her daughter the babies mother is a drug user.

When child is admitted to the hospital for test and x-rays, the grandmother is alarmed by this and states she and must get home before her husband gets husband gets home from work. The grandmother becomes even more upset when she is told that a report was made to the DCFS hotline. The grandmother attempts to leave the hospital with the baby.



# The Spectrum of Certainty

**Definitely-----Likely-----Possibly**

- ▶ We'd like to know what definitely happened, but we can't always
  - ▶ Something may be possible, but not actually what happened
  - ▶ Error in either direction can result in harm
  - ▶ The best we can do is consider all the information we've taken in and determine likelihood
- 